



## Flathead National Forest

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## Media Release

August 23, 2012

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# Wild Cramer Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project

## *Draft Environmental Impact Statement Available for Review*

KALISPELL, MT – The Swan Lake Ranger District of the Flathead National Forest has completed a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the proposed Wild Cramer Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project and is it available for public review and comment. The project area is located within the Island Unit, an aggregation of National Forest System (NFS) lands entirely surrounded by private and State lands, lying approximately ten miles south of Kalispell and two miles west of Flathead Lake.

The Wild Cramer Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project has the following primary purposes:

- Improve and/or maintain the general health, resiliency, and sustainability of forest stands and reduce the risk of insect epidemics and severe disease infestations within the project area.
- Reduce forest fuels build-up adjacent to public and private lands. This would help to provide a safer environment for the public and firefighters should a wildfire occur within the area and increase the probability of stopping wildfires on NFS lands before they burn onto private lands.
- Provide wood products for local communities and to the local timber industry, contributing to short-term timber supply and providing for long-term sustainability of timber on NFS lands.

A secondary purpose is to benefit public recreation by addressing forest health issues within the Blacktail Mountain Ski Area permit boundary.

The DEIS includes a no-action alternative (alternative 1) and four action alternatives. The action alternatives evaluate the potential effects of varying degrees of tree harvesting, thinning, prescribed burning and hazardous fuels reduction activities.

There will be a 45-day comment period on the Wild Cramer Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project DEIS following the expected date of publication of the notice of availability in the Federal Register (August 24, 2012).

For additional information and discussion about the project, there will be an open house on September 26, 2012 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Swan Lake Ranger District, 200 Ranger Station Road, Bigfork, Montana 59911. A copy of the DEIS is available at the Swan Lake Ranger District office in Bigfork, at the Supervisor's Office in Kalispell, or at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/flathead/projects>. For more information, please contact Michele Draggo, Project Leader, at (406) 387-3827.

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